

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE
WESTERN DIVISION

ANGELA DENETRA BROWN,

Plaintiff,

vs.

REUBEN HODGE, et al.,

Defendants.

No. 05-2783-B/P

ORDER ASSESSING \$250 FILING FEE
ORDER OF DISMISSAL
ORDER CERTIFYING APPEAL NOT TAKEN IN GOOD FAITH
AND
NOTICE OF APPELLATE FILING FEE

Plaintiff Angela Denetra Brown, prisoner number 319548, an inmate at the Tennessee Prison for Women ("TPW")¹ in Nashville, who was formerly incarcerated at the Mark Luttrell Reception Center ("MLRC") in Memphis, filed a pro se complaint pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 on October 20, 2005. The Clerk shall record the defendants as Reuben Hodge, Captain Mueller, Rick Paratore, Erica Hale, Ms. Webb, and Quentin White.

I. Assessment of Filing Fee

Under the Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1995 ("PLRA"), 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b), a prisoner bringing a civil action must pay the full filing fee of \$250 required by 28 U.S.C. § 1914(a). The in

¹ The word "prison" is used in this order to refer to all places of confinement or incarceration, including jails, penal farms, detention and classification facilities, or halfway houses.

forma pauperis statute, 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a), merely provides the prisoner the opportunity to make a "downpayment" of a partial filing fee and pay the remainder in installments.

In this case, the plaintiff has properly completed and submitted both an in forma pauperis affidavit containing a certification by the trust fund officer and a trust fund account statement. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1), it is ORDERED that the plaintiff cooperate fully with prison officials in carrying out this order. It is further ORDERED that the trust fund officer at plaintiff's prison shall calculate a partial initial filing fee equal to twenty percent (20%) of the greater of the average balance in or deposits to the plaintiff's trust fund account for the six months immediately preceding the completion of the affidavit. When the account contains any funds, the trust fund officer shall collect them and pay them directly to the Clerk of Court. If the funds in plaintiff's account are insufficient to pay the full amount of the initial partial filing fee, the prison official is instructed to withdraw all of the funds in the plaintiff's account, and forward them to the Clerk of Court. On each occasion that funds are subsequently credited to plaintiff's account, the prison official shall immediately withdraw those funds and forward them to the Clerk of Court, until the initial partial filing fee is paid in full.

It is further ORDERED that, after the initial partial filing fee is fully paid, the trust fund officer shall withdraw from the plaintiff's account and pay to the Clerk of this Court monthly

payments equal to twenty percent (20%) of all deposits credited to plaintiff's account during the preceding month, but only when the amount in the account exceeds \$10.00, until the entire \$250.00 filing fee is paid.

Each time that the trust fund officer makes a payment to the Court as required by this order, he shall print a copy of the prisoner's account statement showing all activity in the account since the last payment under this order and file it with the Clerk along with the payment.

All payments and account statements shall be sent to:

Clerk, United States District Court, Western District of Tennessee, 167 N. Main, Room 242, Memphis, TN 38103

and shall clearly identify plaintiff's name and the case number on the first page of this order.

If plaintiff is transferred to a different prison or released, he is ORDERED to notify the Court immediately of his change of address. If still confined, he shall provide the officials at the new prison with a copy of this order.

If the plaintiff fails to abide by these or any other requirement of this order, the Court may impose appropriate sanctions, including a monetary fine, without any additional notice or hearing by the Court.

The Clerk shall mail a copy of this order to the prison official in charge of prison trust fund accounts at plaintiff's prison. The Clerk is further ORDERED to forward a copy of this order to the Jail Director to ensure that the custodian of the

plaintiff's inmate trust account complies with that portion of the PLRA pertaining to the payment of filing fees.

The obligation to pay this filing fee shall continue despite the immediate dismissal of this case. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2). The Clerk shall not issue process or serve any papers in this case.

II. Analysis of Plaintiff's Claims

Plaintiff Brown alleges that on April 15, 2005, while incarcerated at the MLRC, she was beaten with a lock by another inmate, Stephanie Simpson. Brown states that Defendant Officers Hale and Webb fled. She contends that she was beaten for ten minutes before Captain Mueller arrived and subdued inmate Simpson. Brown alleges that Simpson had previously advised the shift commander that the two of them "were having problems." She further claims that Defendant Paratore talked with Simpson about the problems, laughed, and told Simpson to "do what she had to do to take care of her business." Brown was charged with a disciplinary offense of assault for spitting on Simpson and reclassified to close security. Brown contends that her right to personal safety was violated when Mueller and Paratore failed to lock Simpson up before the assault and by Hale and Webb who fled the scene of the assault rather than intervening to protect her. She also alleges that if Defendant Hodge "had investigated the situation and followed policy with the disciplinaries [she] would be going home in August."

The Sixth Circuit has held that 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(a) requires a federal court to dismiss a complaint without prejudice whenever

a prisoner brings a prison conditions claim without demonstrating that he has exhausted his administrative remedies. Brown v. Toombs, 139 F.3d 1102 (6th Cir. 1998); see Porter v. Nussle, 534 U.S. 516, 532 (2002) ("[T]he PLRA's exhaustion requirement applies to all inmate suits about prison life, whether they involve general circumstances or particular episodes, and whether they allege excessive force or some other wrong."); Booth v. Churner, 532 U.S. 731 (2001) (prisoner seeking only money damages must exhaust administrative remedies although damages are unavailable through grievance system). This requirement places an affirmative burden on prisoners of pleading particular facts demonstrating the complete exhaustion of claims. Knuckles El v. Toombs, 215 F.3d 640, 642 (6th Cir. 2000). To comply with the mandates of 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(a), a prisoner must plead his claims with specificity and show that they have been exhausted by attaching a copy of the applicable administrative dispositions to the complaint or, in the absence of written documentation, describe with specificity the administrative proceeding and its outcome.

Id. at 642; see also Boyd v. Corrections Corp. of Am., 380 F.3d 989, 985-96 (6th Cir. 2004) (describing the standard for demonstrating exhaustion when prison officials fail to respond in a timely manner to a grievance), cert. denied, 125 S. Ct. 1639 (2005); Baxter v. Rose, 305 F.3d 486 (6th Cir. 2002) (prisoner who fails to allege exhaustion adequately may not amend his complaint to avoid a sua sponte dismissal); Curry v. Scott, 249 F.3d 493, 503-04 (6th Cir. 2001) (no abuse of discretion for district court to dismiss for failure to exhaust when plaintiffs did not submit

documents showing complete exhaustion of their claims or otherwise demonstrate exhaustion). Furthermore, § 1997(e) requires the prisoner to exhaust her administrative remedies before filing suit and, therefore, she cannot exhaust those remedies during the pendency of the action. Freeman v. Francis, 196 F.3d 641, 645 (6th Cir. 1999). Finally, the Sixth Circuit recently held that district courts are required to dismiss a complaint in its entirety, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(a), that contains any unexhausted claims. Jones Bey v. Johnson, 407 F.3d 801, 805-09 (6th Cir. 2005).

Plaintiff Brown filed a grievance (no. 7535) complaining of the actions of Mueller, Paratore, Hale, and Webb. Mueller's response stated that the inmates were immediately subdued by security, no grounds existed for the claim of failure to protect, and the allegations of prior knowledge of problems were "hearsay" and without merit. The grievance committee, Warden Hodge, and Assistant Commissioner of Operations determined that the matter was non-grievable and Brown was required to appeal her disciplinary conviction through the Uniform Disciplinary Procedures. However, Defendants Hodge and White were not named in any grievance submitted by the plaintiff, as required by Moorer v. Price, 83 Fed. Appx. 770, 772 (6th Cir. Dec. 9, 2003) (plaintiff did not exhaust claim against warden because his grievance did not identify the warden or articulate any claim against her); Thomas v. Woolum, 337 F.3d 720, 733-34 (6th Cir. 2003); and Curry, 249 F.3d at 504.

The Sixth Circuit has held that "[a] plaintiff who fails to allege exhaustion of administrative remedies through

'particularized averments' does not state a claim on which relief may be granted, and his complaint must be dismissed sua sponte." Baxter, 305 F.3d at 489. Moreover, pursuant to the recent decision in Jones Bey, a district court must dismiss any complaint that contains unexhausted claims rather than attempting to sever the exhausted claims. Accordingly, the complaint is DISMISSED in its entirety, without prejudice, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(a).²

III. Appeal Issues

The next issue to be addressed is whether plaintiff should be allowed to appeal this decision in forma pauperis. Twenty-eight U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) provides that an appeal may not be taken in forma pauperis if the trial court certifies in writing that it is not taken in good faith.

The good faith standard is an objective one. Coppedge v. United States, 369 U.S. 438, 445 (1962). Under Brown v. Toombs an appellate court must also dismiss a complaint if a prisoner has failed to comply with § 1997e's exhaustion requirements. Accordingly, if a district court determines that a complaint must be dismissed as unexhausted, the plaintiff would not yet be able to present an issue in good faith on appeal because that appeal would also be subject to immediate dismissal. Thus, the same considerations that lead the Court to dismiss this case for failure

² As the Sixth Circuit has explained, "If the plaintiff has exhausted his administrative remedies, he may always refile his complaint and plead exhaustion with sufficient detail to meet our heightened pleading requirement, assuming that the relevant statute of limitations has not run." Baxter, 305 F.3d at 489.

to exhaust administrative remedies compel the conclusion that an appeal would not be taken in good faith.

It is therefore CERTIFIED, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3), that any appeal in this matter by plaintiff is not taken in good faith and plaintiff may not proceed on appeal in forma pauperis.

The final matter to be addressed is the assessment of a filing fee if plaintiff appeals the dismissal of this case.³ In McGore v. Wrigglesworth, 114 F.3d 601, 610-11 (6th Cir. 1997), the Sixth Circuit set out specific procedures for implementing the PLRA. Therefore, the plaintiff is instructed that if she wishes to take advantage of the installment procedures for paying the appellate filing fee, she must comply with the procedures set out in McGore and § 1915(b).

IT IS SO ORDERED this 4th day of May, 2006.

s/ J. DANIEL BREEN
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

³ Effective April 9, 2006, the fee for docketing an appeal is \$450. See Judicial Conference Schedule of Fees, ¶ 1, Note following 28 U.S.C. § 1913. Under 28 U.S.C. § 1917, a district court also charges a \$5 fee:

Upon the filing of any separate or joint notice of appeal or application for appeal or upon the receipt of any order allowing, or notice of the allowance of, an appeal or of a writ of certiorari \$5 shall be paid to the clerk of the district court, by the appellant or petitioner.